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HOMEMAKERS' CHAT

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U. S. DEPARTMENT
OF AGRICULTURE
OFFICE OF INFORMATION

(For immediate release)

Subject: "Cleaning with a "Dry Suds" Shampoo" - information from extension home management specialists of the U. S. Department of Agriculture.

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Spring's bright sun puts the spotlight on winter's gloomy grime. Makes you want to brighten up things around the house...doesn't it? Take a look at the upholstered furniture, for example. Is it about three shades darker than it was last fall? Does this gloomy color reflect an accumulation of winter dirt? And would you like to do something about it?

Well...you can't put the sofa through the washing machine...but you can do a home cleaning job that'll make the sofa look bright and new. That is... you can...if the upholstery material is washable. And if you'll let "dry suds" do the work.

Try cleaning a little spot where it won't show...maybe at the back or maybe behind the cushions. If "dry suds" bring a bright, new gleam to the test spot... that's your cue to go ahead.

You've never made "dry suds"? Then why don't you try the recipe recommended by home management specialists of the Kentucky Agricultural Extension Service.

Just as you'd expect...the ingredients for "dry suds" are soap and water. A neutral soap...and soft water. You may use soap flakes, beads, chips or a bar shaved in small pieces. But be sure it's neutral. How can you tell? Take a bit of the soap on the tip of your tongue. If it doesn't sting or burn...the soap is neutral.

Now to make "dry suds"...dissolve a half a cup of the neutral soap in one quart of hot...soft water. (If you use hard water, it'll take more soap). Then pour the soap solution into a wide-mouth jar and let it cool. It makes a jelly.

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Take a half a cup of the soap jelly and beat it with a rotary egg beater until you have a pretty white froth that looks like a good icing. That white froth is "dry suds".

And now for just a few pointers on that "dry suds" shampoo for your upholstered furniture.

Choose a comfortable place to work where the air can circulate freely about the furniture. If the day's pretty...you may want to work on the porch. See to it that the furniture isn't in direct sunlight. There's danger of fading...you know.

First step in the cleaning is to get off all the dust you can. The vacuum cleaner is good for this job. Or you may use a whisk broom or a beater.

Next...you apply the frothy white "dry suds". The trick is...to clean just a small space at a time...then let each new area overlap the last one a little. Use a brush...or a sponge...or a cloth to put the "dry suds" on the fabric. Spread them on liberally and use a light circular motion to shampoo the dirt out. The suds will soak up the dirt and your next problem is how to remove the soiled suds. A plate scraper is a handy tool for this job...or you may use a spatula.

Rinsing is the next step...and a mighty important one too...because you want to make sure no soap remains in the material...and you want to use as little water as possible. That's to keep the foundation from getting wet. For rinsing...use a sponge or cloth wrung from clear...luke warm water. It'll take two rinses to get the "dry suds" off.

Last step in the "dry suds" treatment is to wipe the fabric thoroughly dry. For this...use a dry absorbent cloth. And there's just one thing you need to keep in mind...be sure the finishing strokes go in the direction of the nap or weave.

Just one thing more...even after you've given your upholstered furniture a thorough "dry suds" shampoo...you may find some stubborn grease spots. So when the upholstery material is dry...you'll need to give these spots special treatment. Use a noninflammable dry cleaner. You'll get best results if you work from the outside toward the center of the spot.

